OF TIDES AND TIMES

VIDEO

FOOTAGE
16 mm

AUDIO

START MARK 000

NOMAD RIDING CAMEL IN DESERT. (IS ACCOMPANIED BY RIDERLESS CAMEL AND DOG).

NARRATOR:

The timeless landscape of Sahelian deserts. Centuries pass... A way of life continues unchanged—conditioned by the cycles of nature. Suddenly, nature becomes an enemy.

The earth and the skies are left without water, without hope. The only alternative to death is a new way of life in a new environment.

SOMALI FISHERMEN (FORMERLY NOMADS) BRING FISH CATCH ASHORE.

In Somalia, the nomads of yesterday are the fishermen of today. Their rangelands destitute by persistent droughts, the sea is their new life.

TILT UP FROM WATER TO KALABSHA TEMPLE IN EGYPT. TEMPLE WALL WITH CHRISTIAN CROSS ENGRAVED ON FACE OF EGYPTIAN DEITY.

The monuments of Nubia on the banks of the Nile... Centuries roll by... Successive civilizations leave their imprints on the stones.
Yet, the temples stand -- perpetuating the ancient Egyptians, the legendary Pharaohs and their deities holding the 'key of life'... Modern times give the symbolic 'key of life' a new meaning. Because, for the temples too, it is the beginning of a second life. Threatened with permanent flooding when the Aswan High Dam was built on the Nile, temples like Kalabsha and Abu Simbel had to be taken apart and re-erected on new sites.

This film presents five stories of the times of Man as shaped by one of the essential elements of life -- water.

"OF TIDES AND TIMES"

Philae -- the pearl of Egypt... The sacred abode of Isis inundated by the waters that once reflected its beauty.
Standing on an island in the Nile, the temple was trapped between two dams – the Aswan High Dam and an old smaller dam – until the ingenuity of modern man came to its rescue.

The submerged island was sealed off from the surrounding water by a coffer dam – two walls of interlocking sheet-steel with sand in between. Then the water was pumped out, and the monuments were taken apart, down to the last foundation stone.

After the engineers left, the archaeologists took over to unearth the past. When their work is done, the grounds where Philae stood for centuries will be abandoned to the waters for ever.

The earliest of the 41,000 stone blocks of Philae were carved more than 2,300 years ago. The cult of Isis, the goddess of fertility and protector of children, flourished until the sixth century A.D. When Christianity came, the 'key of life' was replaced by the coptic cross, and the sanctuary of I became a Christian altar.
The temples are now rising again on the nearby island of Agilkia -- leveled and reshaped to look exactly like Philae.

Many nations and agencies, under the guidance of UNESCO, have contributed men, money and material for the salvage of Philae. One of the largest contributors has been the World Food Programme, which uses food donated by member nations as an investment in economic and social development. In six years, the Programme has provided more than six million dollars worth of food as part payment of the wages of Philae's workers.

When all the 41,000 pieces are re-assembled, the waters of the Nile will once again reflect the beauty of Philae.

The dam on the Nile brought about changes in human lives too. The Sudanese village of Wadi Halfa, once nourished by the river, now lies buried in its waters.

Far into the interior of Sudan, a new village now shelters the Nubians who live in Wadi Halfa.
Nearly two decades have elapsed since life began afresh for 7000 farmers from Sudanese Nubia. New Halfa, built on uninhabited land, has grown into a community of 20,000.

For the generation whose ancestral homes vanished beneath the Nile, the past is hard to forget...The memory of the Nile lingers on...

How can we forget the Nile -- we who grew in its lap. In Nubia where it never rains, the Nile sustained our life - generation after generation. But now, dams must be built to produce electricity and to irrigate new lands, and villages like our Wadi Halfa must be abandoned...

Our journey to New Halfa was long and tiring. We all felt very sad. Wadi Halfa now belonged to the past. And the future was uncertain...

To revive our spirits, we began our life in New Halfa with a traditional Nubian dance...

(*** Different voice)
New Halfa has no Nile, but the river Atbar was harnessed to irrigate the virgin farm-lands that we were given.

Many years have passed since then. We are used to our new life now. Our farmlands yield good harvests.

Now and then we have a community feast and talk about old times. We remember our first years in New Halfa, when we had no money to live on. The World Food Program helped us to get started. For six years, before our own crops made us self-sufficient, it sent food for all the families that settler here.

Somehow we can't get used to our new home here. The space is limited and building materials are expensive. It is not easy to add new rooms when grown children get married. In Nubia we had no such problem. Since it never rained there, we used mud bricks that cost very little.
** Perhaps New Halfa belongs more to the younger generation than to us. Our boys and girls who came here as small children have come of age now. They have grown up in a new environment. They remember little of their ancestral homes. But we have brought them up in our Nubian tradition and I am sure they will preserve it.

NARRATOR:

In the Syrian town of Hama, a legacy from the past has been preserved. Its water wheels have lifted the waters of the river Orontes since Roman times. Driven by the flow of the river itself, they have rotated endlessly through the centuries. Such skillful use of water resources once made Syria the granary of the Roman Empire.

But Syria's demand for water is much greater today. The River Euphrates, the country's main water resource, must be put to maximum use.
Dams, pumping stations, syphons, canals. The costs are enormous. But help comes from international sources in cash and in food grants that cover a part of the workers' wages.

With more water, Syria will be able to put thousands of more acres to the plough. The expense and the effort will mean better standards of life...

But there are still millions of men and women for whom a bucket of water means an hour of toil.

Um Hartin is an old Syrian village with no underground water. It must depend on rain. In the dry season water must be brought from distant sources.

Um Hartin has existed since pre-Roman days and the continuity of its time is witnessed in the stone blocks of ancient dwellings.

But in its antiquity Um Hartin has found a solution to its water problem -- large cisterns built by the Romans to collect rain water.
After centuries of neglect, they are now being cleaned and restored by the villagers. This required a genuine community effort. And the incentive was provided by the World Food Programme which gave food rations to all the volunteers.

The inhabitants of the hilltop village of Al Mara'ah are shepherds. They need water for their animals. But like Um Hartin, Al Mara'ah has no water within easy reach.

The answer to Al Marrah's problem too is rain water collected in ancient cisterns left behind by the Romans. Al Mara'ah has over 200 small underground cisterns. When all are cleaned and restored, there will be enough water to last through the dry season.

By restoring the ancient cisterns, the Syrian villagers have made the most of what they have.
In Africa's Sahelian region, the proverbial sands of time are confronting man with a devastating reality...

The village of Mao in Chad -- once a green oasis, now an arid panorama of sand and dust... A victim of encroaching deserts.

The marketplace belies Mao's sandy isolation. Most of the people who come here are inhabitants of the surrounding desert -- nomads who will return to their camps by nightfall.

The nomads of the Sahel are herdsmen in constant search of water and grazing lands.

In recent decades, increasing human and livestock populations have been taxing Sahel's scanty resources beyond natural limits.

Deprived of its protective vegetation, the land is ravaged by wind and rain.

The cycle is repeated as denuded areas are abandoned and new rangelands exploited. Several million acres thus turn into sandy wasteland every year. When droughts occur the process is accelerated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image Ref.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LAKE CHAD</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREEN FIELDS. VEGETABLE PLOT</td>
<td>691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESERT WELL. MAN LIFTS WATER WITH PRIMITIVE DEVICE</td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFORESTATION PROJECT SEEDLINGS BEING WATERED</td>
<td>704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREST</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP OF NOMADS CROSSES DESERT ON DONKEYS</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUT OF DROUGHT VICTIM. YOUNG WOMAN AND CHILD. OTHER WOMAN POUNDS GRAIN. HUT IN DESERT</td>
<td>732</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here and there in the sandy wilderness is water... South of Mao, in the village of Bol, the waters of Lake Chad are being used to make the arid lands of Bol green and productive.

The toils of man pitted against the tides of sand... Water, wherever found, must be put to use.

Seedlings must be raised and transplanted, one by one, to grow forests.

Forest check soil erosion, reduce wind speeds, and create climatic conditions favourable to rain.

Ravaged lands, persistent droughts, human suffering... The recovery of the Sahel is a matter of long-range efforts. The international community helps with emergency food aid, which is co-ordinated by the World Food Programme. The task ahead is not easy. The devastating effects of the droughts persist. And beyond the huts of the victims there is only the barren desert.
In Somalia, the droughts of the early seventies created a human drama, unique in recent times.

For Somalia's nomadic herdsmen, grass in the rangelands and water in the wells are the basic essentials of life.

The rainy season offers both, but it comes only once a year. When the rains are gone the nomads must fold their portable huts and go wherever water may be found.

In the early seventies, the rains failed year after year. Pastures yielded only dust, wells only despair. Livestock perished. Hunger took its toll. Rangelands were devastated for years to come. For 200,000 nomads survival became a question mark. The only answer was an end of the nomadic way of life. The survivors must become farmers and fishermen...

Under a plan developed by the Somali government, 5,000 nomads have come to live in the coastal village of Brava, where fishing is an old tradition.
NOMAD FAMILY SETS UP HUT IN BRAVA

Their portable huts will serve as their temporary shelter. And daily rations from the World Food Programme will supplement their diet, until their new way of life makes them self-sufficient.

GROUP OF NOMADS WATCHING THE SEA

Brava's origins are said to go back to the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese traveller Vasco Da Gama broke his voyage to India on its shores.

NOMADS' LED BY BRAVA FISHERMAN, GO TO SEA TO LEARN SWIMMING

The shores of Brava must now be home to those who had never seen the sea before.

NOMADS BEING TAUGHT HOW TO CAST FISHING NET

The fishermen of Brava have taken the newcomers in their fold to teach them how to master the waves, how to harvest the riches of the ocean...

OLDER NOMADS AND WOMEN REPAIR FISHING NET

NOMADS GO OUT TO THE SEA IN MOTOR BOATS AND CATCH FISH IN NETS
For Somalia, turning nomads into fishermen means the growth of a new industry -- a new commodity for export.

For the drought-stricken nomad, it means the transformation of a way of life in the interest of survival... and for the World Food Programme, an objective to be fulfill a helping hand to human societies caught up in a process of environmental change.

As homes are built for the new fishermen, the nomadic huts that they brought to Brava will be discarded, and their remaining link with the past will disappear for ever.

Those who once roamed the deserts, are being gradually assimilated into the mainstream of Brava's life. Ravaged by adversity and shunned by hope, they have succeeded in forging a link with a new environment.